

## Vocation: The Theology of the Christian Life

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The Reformation contributed three major teachings that would characterize Protestantism in all of its diversity: (1) justification by faith, (2) the authority of Scripture, and (3) the doctrine of vocation. The first two still have currency, despite recent criticisms. However, the concept of vocation has been gradually lost. First, it was turned into a “work ethic”; then it turned into a pious attitude empty of specific content; then it was reduced to just another synonym for “a job.”

Yet, in the Reformation, vocation was nothing less than the doctrine of the Christian life. Vocation was the locus for other important teachings, such as the priesthood of all believers, good works, and sanctification. It was not merely a theoretical teaching; rather, as taught in the early Reformation catechisms and sermons, the doctrine of vocation gave practical guidance to Christians in their marriages, parenthood, economic activity, and citizenship.

The doctrine of vocation shows Christians how to live out their faith in the world. It has to do with God’s presence in the world and with how he works through human beings for his purposes. For Christians, vocation discloses the spirituality of everyday life.

Today, Christians are greatly confused about how they should relate to the world. This is evident in the controversies about political involvement and cultural engagement. On the personal scale, champions of “family values” have a soaring divorce rate. Many Christians compartmentalize their lives, conforming to a consumerist and materialistic culture, while pursuing transcendent spiritual experiences that have little to do with their everyday lives. Christians today are

variously—and sometimes simultaneously—waging culture wars, withdrawing from the world, and conforming to it.

The church today desperately needs to recover the doctrine of vocation. Doing so would show Christians how once again they can be the world's salt and light and revitalize contemporary Christianity.

## Vocation in the Bible

The word *vocation* is simply the Latin term for “calling.” The best biblical formulation of the concept is 1 Corinthians 7:17: “Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him.” Thus, God assigns different kinds of life for each Christian and then calls each Christian to that assignment.

The immediate context of that passage has to do with ethnicity (being a circumcised Jew or an uncircumcised Gentile), social position (being a slave or being free), and family status (being married, single, or a widow). The apostle Paul has much to say about such callings. In Ephesians 5–6, he explores the relationships of husband and wife, parent and child, and master and servant. Here, we find not just moralizing or practical instructions; rather, we are told that God himself is manifest in these ordinary earthly relationships. Marriage is an image of Christ and the church. Parenting has to do with God the Father and, implicitly, God the Son. Servants (or slaves) are serving not so much their masters but Christ. Masters, in their treatment of those who serve them, must remember that they, too, are servants (or slaves) of a master in heaven. In Romans 13, we are told that all authority comes from God who gives his authority to human beings in various offices. God works through earthly rulers as his instruments, his agents, to restrain evil and to protect those who do well. Thus, God not only calls and assigns people to different stations in life; he evidently inhabits these stations.

Other biblical texts describe God's calling people to his service and then giving them specific gifts that enable them to carry out that service. He does this for prophets and for kings—including kings of unbelieving nations—but he also does this for seemingly more mundane kinds of work. For example, he calls the artists who are to make the art of the tabernacle and gives them their talents:

Then Moses said to the people of Israel, “See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every

skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of workman or skilled designer.” (Ex. 35:30–35)

Lest we think Bezalel and Oholiab had a unique *charism*, we are told that God called and gifted other artists, the sign of which was their own desire to create art. “And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the LORD had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work” (Ex. 36:2).

## Luther on Vocation

The great theologian of vocation is Martin Luther. To understand vocation, it is important to start with Luther and the Lutherans. Calvin and the Puritans also talked about vocation—and contemporary English-language scholarship about the topic tends to focus on their contributions—but they emphasized God’s calling in terms of his demands on his followers and what they are to do. This may be part of it, but in order to grasp the magnitude of this teaching, it is essential to first understand the sense in which vocation is *God’s* work. For Luther, vocation, like justification, is a function of God’s grace. In vocation, God providentially works *through* human beings to care for his creation and to distribute his gifts.

When we pray the Lord’s prayer, to use one of Luther’s illustrations, we ask God to give us this day our daily bread, and he does. The *way* he gives us our daily bread is *through* the vocations of farmers, millers, and bakers. We might add truck drivers, factory workers, bankers, warehouse attendants, and food service workers. Virtually every step of our whole economic system contributes to that bagel, piece of toast, or Danish we had for breakfast. Thus, when we thank God for our food before we eat, we are right to do so. He provides our food, and he does so by means of vocation; that is, ordinary people just doing their jobs.

To use another example from Luther, God could have chosen to create new human beings out of the dust to populate the earth as he did with the first man. Instead, he chose to create new life—which, however commonplace, is no less miraculous—*by means of* mothers and fathers, wives and husbands—the vocations of the family.

To continue the point, God protects us through the vocations of earthly government, as detailed in Romans 13. He proclaims his Word by means of human pastors. He teaches by means of teachers. He creates works of beauty and meaning by means of human artists, to whom he has given particular talents.

When someone we care about is hospitalized, we pray for healing. God uses vocation—doctors, nurses, anesthesiologists, and other health care workers—to deliver that healing. God’s normal way of working in the world is through means. God does not have to use means, and he is capable of working immediately. He can heal with a miracle, just as he once provided the children of Israel with their daily bread—the manna of the wilderness—without farmers and bakers. However, God’s normal way of operating is through human beings. This is because he desires us to serve each other.

According to Luther, vocation is a “mask of God.”<sup>21</sup> God is milking the cows through the vocation of the milkmaid. God is hidden in vocation. We see the milkmaid or farmer or doctor or pastor or artist. However, looming behind this human mask, God is genuinely present and active in what they do for us.

Similarly, as we carry out our various vocations, we, too, are masks of God. Evangelicals often talk about what God is doing “in” their lives. Vocation encourages reflection on what God is doing “through” our lives. Just as God is working through the vocation of others to bless us, he is working through us to bless others. In our vocations, we work side by side with God, as it were, taking part in his ceaseless creative activity and laboring with him as he providentially cares for his creation.

## The Christian’s Multiple Vocations

Luther taught that Christians have multiple vocations that, in turn, exist in four estates that God has established to order human life: the church, the household, the state, and what Luther called “the common order of Christian love.”<sup>22</sup>

The first calling, or vocation, that every Christian has is to the estate of the *church*. Every Christian has been called through the gospel into the life of faith (Rom. 8:30), becoming a member of Christ’s body, the church. In the words of Luther’s *Small Catechism*, “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel.... even as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth.”<sup>23</sup>

God works providentially through nonbelievers as well as believers in their labors. Was the farmer who grew the grain for our daily bread or the police officer who kept us from getting robbed a Christian? Strictly speaking, as far as God’s working through human beings, it does not matter. Nonbelievers can be said to occupy stations or to hold offices. Vocation, strictly speaking, applies to Christians—those who hear themselves addressed in God’s Word. Christians

respond to that Word in faith. What they do in their other callings is the fruit of their faith.

God also calls people to tasks and offices in his church. Pastors speak rightly of being called into the ministry, whereupon God works through them to teach his Word, distribute his sacraments, and give spiritual care to his people. Laypeople, too, are called to do tasks in the local congregation—serving in its different offices, singing in the choir, serving on committees, serving meals, and in other ways blessing their fellow members.

The second estate is the *household*. For Luther the estate of the household includes both the family and the activities by which it supports itself. He had in mind the concept expressed in the Greek word *oikonomia*, the laws of the household. This is the source of the English word *economy*. For Luther, in his day of family-based labor, economic life is connected with family life. Since then, family life and economic life have been split into two realms, and today they are often in conflict with each other. The doctrine of vocation brings them back together.

Although today we think of vocation primarily in terms of economic activity, Luther has more to say about the vocations of the family. God established marriage, and being a husband or a wife is a vocation. Being a father or a mother is also a vocation. So is being a son or a daughter. So is being a brother or sister, a nephew or uncle, a grandmother or grandfather. One person holds multiple vocations within a family; for example, a woman may be the wife of her husband, the mother of her children, the daughter of her mother, the sister of her brother, and more, with each vocation having its particular dimensions of service.

The third estate is the *state*. This includes earthly government, but it is also more than that. We might say it is society, or, better yet, because it is more particular, culture. This estate involves the many social networks that we are part of. If the *household* includes the particular economic labor that an individual pursues (as in microeconomics), the state includes the larger economic interrelationships (as in macroeconomics). Thus, Luther sometimes discusses particular economic vocations in this category as well.

At any rate, we were each born into a particular time, place, and society. The cultural context in which we find ourselves is part of the life that God has assigned us. We thus have responsibilities to our government and to our culture as a whole. Some Christians are called to positions of authority in the government. Americans have the unusual calling of being both subjects and rulers at the same time because our democratic republic places the governing authorities themselves under the authority of the people who elect them. Christians therefore have the vocation of citizenship, which means that politics, civic involvement,

and cultural engagement are all realms of Christian service. (Notice how the doctrine of vocation speaks to current controversies about Christians' involvement in politics. The church can have no political agenda as such because the estates are distinct and God operates in each of them in his own way. Yet, Christians do have a vocation as citizens, and they are obliged to work for the betterment of the social system in which they find themselves.)

Our formal positions in the family, the workplace, the church, and the culture are not the only spheres of service to which God assigns us and to which he calls us. Journalists like to refer to themselves as “the fourth estate,” but Luther’s fourth estate is what he called the “common order of Christian love.” This is the realm where people of different vocations interact informally. In Christ’s parable of the good Samaritan, the priest and the Levite were on the way to serve in their vocations but ignored the man who was bleeding by the side of the road. In the ordinary course of everyday life and in our relationships with our friends and neighbors, and even with our enemies and strangers, God also calls us to service.

In stressing the spiritual significance of these ostensibly secular estates, Luther was challenging the Roman Catholic practice of reserving the terms *vocation* and *calling* for religious orders—to an individual’s calling from God to become a priest, a monk, or a nun. To enter into these spiritual offices required taking a vow of celibacy (thereby rejecting marriage and parenthood), poverty (thereby rejecting full participation in the economic life of the workplace), and obedience (which involved substituting the authority of the church for that of the state). Luther countered medieval Catholicism by affirming the very kinds of life that the clerical vows renounced—marriage, parenthood, economic activity, secular citizenship—as being true vocations from God.

Luther’s *Small Catechism*, used for religious instruction for laypeople to this day, includes a “Table of Duties,” which is described in the headnote as being certain passages of Scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities.<sup>4</sup> The phrase *holy orders*, of course, is the terminology for being ordained into the priesthood. In this section of the catechism that was used to teach the doctrine of vocation, the holy orders are not only pastors but also husbands and wives, parents and children, magistrates and subjects, employers and “male and female servants, hired men, and laborers.”<sup>5</sup>

Luther insisted that the Christian life does not require *withdrawal from* the world but rather *engagement in* the world. The Christian faith is to be lived out not primarily in the activities of the church—which is the realm of the gospel, where one receives the forgiveness of sins—but in vocation. Good works belong not so much to the church—to its acts of devotion and its exercises of piety—but to the world, which becomes the arena where faith bears fruit in acts of love.

What this meant in practice is that the spiritual disciplines moved out of the monastery and into secular life.<sup>6</sup> Celibacy became faithfulness in marriage. Poverty became thrift and hard work. Obedience became submission to the law. Most importantly, prayer, meditation, and worship—while still central to every Christian’s vocation in the church—also moved into the family and the workplace.

Today, even Protestant Christians have often slipped into the assumption that serving God is a matter of church work or spiritual exercises. Churches set up programs that can take up every night of the week. Some Christians are so busy doing church activities, making evangelism calls, or going to Bible studies that they neglect their spouses and children. Some Christians are preoccupied with the Lord’s work while letting their marriages fall apart, ignoring the needs of their children, and otherwise sinning against the actual responsibilities to which God has called them. According to the doctrine of vocation, the church is the place where Christians meet every week to find the forgiveness of Christ, feed on God’s Word, and grow in their faith. Then they are sent out into their vocations—to their spouses, children, jobs, and culture—for that faith to bear fruit.

That the Christian life is to be lived out in vocation is made explicit in the *Small Catechism*, which also demonstrates that despite this priesthood of all believers, the doctrine of vocation teaches a high view of the pastoral office. The section on confession—which Lutherans practice both privately and corporately in the liturgy for the Divine Service—asks: “What sins shall we confess?” The answer emphasizes vocation: “Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, a man-servant or maid-servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any one by words or deeds; whether you have stolen, neglected, or wasted aught, or done other injury.”

After this moral scrutiny of one’s vocations, the sinner confesses those sins to the pastor, whereupon “we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the confessor, as from God himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven.” The pastor, by virtue of his vocation, becomes a channel for God’s grace. Just as God supplies daily bread through the vocation of the farmer, he supplies the bread of God’s Word through the vocation of the pastor. The forgiven sinner, built up in his faith through the gospel, is then sent back into his or her vocations to live out that faith.<sup>7</sup>

## The Purpose of Vocation

What does it mean to live out faith in one's callings? The Bible is clear: "only faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6); "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Tim. 1:5). Here we come to the ethical implications of vocation and to the relationship between good works and justification by faith. According to the Reformation doctrine of vocation, the purpose of every vocation is to love and serve our neighbors.

God does not need our good works, Luther said, but our neighbor does.<sup>8</sup> Our relationship with God is based completely on *his* work for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Justification by faith completely excludes any kind of dependence on our good works for our salvation. We come before God clothed not in our own works or merits but solely in the works and merits of Christ that are imputed to us. Having been justified by faith, God then sends us into the world, into our vocations, to love and serve our neighbors. Though we may speak of serving God in our vocations, strictly speaking, we do not serve God; he always serves us. We are to serve our neighbors—the actual human beings whom God brings into our lives as we carry out our daily callings. To the monastics who insisted that they were saved, at least in part, by their good works—the prayers, devotions, and acts of piety they do in the cloister—Luther asked in what sense these are even good works. Who are they helping? Luther criticized monasticism for valuing not only separation from the world but also (in the cases of some of the most honored monastics: the hermits and the anchoresses) of separation from their neighbors. For Luther, good works must not be directed to God; rather, they must be directed to the neighbor, which happens in vocation. Thus is fulfilled "all the Law and the Prophets," first to love God ("not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" [1 John 4:10]; that is, a love that comes from faith), and second to love the neighbor, which is also the working of faith (Matt. 22:37–40).

Every vocation has its particular neighbors. In the church, pastors are to love and serve the members of their congregations, and the members of the congregation are to love and serve their pastor and each other. The family is a network of mutual love and service. The vocation of marriage entails only one neighbor. Husbands are to love and serve their wives, and wives are to love and serve their husbands. Parents are to love and serve their children who, in turn, are to love and serve their parents. In the vocations of the state, rulers are to love and serve their subjects. The subjects love and serve their rulers and each other. Workers love and serve their customers.



In the economic vocations, workers of every kind are to carry out their labors in love and service to their customers. In the simplest terms, a business that does not provide goods or services that people need or that does not help them in some way will not stay in business. Vocation, in many ways, replicates the division of labor and the laws of economics. However, there is a difference. Free-market capitalism posits each person in the economic order acting in his or her enlightened self-interest; that is, in loving and serving himself. Economics in light of vocation may follow the same laws of supply and demand, competition and markets. For the Christian, economic productivity is not just a matter of self-interest; it can be a way of loving and serving others. Vocation counters the materialism and self-centeredness of economic pursuits by giving them a new meaning and a new orientation.

Vocation also transforms the nature of authority. Certain vocations do exercise authority over others. However, this is not just a matter of exercising power over them. Instead, authority must be used in love and service to those under the authority. Jesus said:

You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:42–45)

According to Jesus, having authority is not a matter of lording it over other people; rather, it is a means of serving them.

Vocation clarifies moral issues. Parents are called to love and serve their children, not abuse them. Doctors are called to heal their patients, not kill them. The text on the vocation of government leaders (Romans 13) has often been used to quell dissent and to justify absolute obedience to the political status quo. However, the leaders, described as agents of God's authority, are charged with punishing evildoers and protecting those who do well. Leaders who do the opposite, who punish the good and protect evildoers, have no calling from God that would authorize such behavior. Leaders are called to love and serve those under their authority, and thus have no warrant from God to exploit and tyrannize them. Tyrants sin against their vocation, and God, who has called them to do justice, is not present nor is he working through their office when they violate their callings.

Vocations have their authorities, but they also have their authorizations, to the point that some actions are sinful when done outside of vocation but good works

when done within vocation. Luther gave as examples the soldiers' authorization under a Romans 13 chain of command to "bear the sword," and the judges' authorization to punish criminals, while the Christian without these callings must forgive his enemies and wrongdoers.<sup>9</sup> The principle also explains why sex outside of marriage is immoral, but sex within marriage is a good work. The difference is not "a piece of paper." It is vocation. We have no calling from God that would authorize having sex with someone to whom we are not married. Within the vocation of marriage, sex is not only authorized, but it becomes the means by which God creates a one-flesh union, engenders new life, and builds a family.

### The Priesthood and Its Sacrifices

Vocation has to do with the priesthood of all believers. This teaching does not mean that every Christian is a minister or that ministers are no longer necessary. As we have seen, the doctrine of vocation was generally accompanied by a high view of the pastoral office. Notice that Protestant clergy, with the exception of Anglicans, are generally not called priests. Instead, they are *ministers*, which means "servant"; or *pastors*, which means "shepherds"; or, popularly, *preachers*, which focuses on the work of the office. This is because a priest is someone who performs a sacrifice. Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do have priests who offer up, in the mass, the sacrifice of Christ. Protestants, including Anglicans, have always taught that we no longer need sacrifices for our sins, since Christ, our great High Priest, offered himself as our sacrifice once and for all (Heb. 9:26). Yet, in light of that sacrifice, God calls us "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Rom. 12:1).

Loving and serving in vocation involves an act of self-denial for the sake of someone else. That is, it involves a sacrifice. Again, Mark 10 says that rulers are to serve as Christ did, giving his life as a ransom. Today's "Gentiles" not only seek to lord it over others, they are obsessed with self-fulfillment and self-assertion. Vocation, on the contrary, focuses on self-sacrifice. Thus, vocation involves bearing the cross. Jesus said: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). This happens in the "general estate of Christian love," as well as in the church, the society, the workplace, and the family.

This spirituality of self-sacrifice for the neighbor illuminates the scriptural passages about different vocations that are so difficult for modern Christians—in our culture of self-assertion, self-actualization, and self-fulfillment—to understand. For example, the Bible instructs wives to submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ. At the same time, though, the Bible instructs husbands

to love their wives “as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph. 5:25). The husband is not to receive the wife’s submission in domination or in lording it over her, seeing as that was not how Christ loved the church. Instead, he is to emulate Christ precisely in “giving himself up” for his wife. Thus, both the wife and the husband are called to sacrifice themselves for each other. Both are presenting themselves as living sacrifices.

The father, coming home from work dead tired, has presented his body as a living sacrifice for his family; so has the mother who drives her kids to soccer practice when she has many other things she would rather do; and so has the worker who has put in long hours to do the best job possible for the company’s customers. Christ, who is present in vocation, takes up all of these sacrifices, small or great, into his sacrifice. He loves and serves his creation by means of our love and service in our vocations.

To be sure, we often sin in and against vocation. Instead of serving, we want to be served. Instead of loving our neighbor, we often use our neighbor for our own selfish purposes. We constantly violate God’s design and his calling. As a result, our relationships are often twisted and unhappy—a source of conflict and misery. We must confess our sins against our vocations and against our neighbors and receive the forgiveness of Christ who bore all of those sins in his body on the cross. Then, in faith, we find love again and work to restore those relationships. This is the Christian life.

## Vocation and Transfiguration

The Swedish theologian Einar Billing in his classic work on vocation entitled *Our Calling* observes: “In all our religious and ethical life, we are given to an incredible overestimation of the extraordinary at the expense of the ordinary.”<sup>10</sup> We expect our religion to give us miracles, spectacular events, and mystical experiences. We often think of morality in terms of major stands on world issues and heroic action, but vocation discloses the spiritual significance of everyday life. Our spiritual and moral lives are to be found in our relationships and in our tasks in our families, the workplace, the church, and the society. Vocation transfigures our ordinary, mundane existence, charging it with spiritual significance and with the very presence of God.

Luther said that changing a baby’s diaper is a holy work.<sup>11</sup> A child doing his chores and a servant girl cleaning the house are outperforming the Carthusian monks in works of holiness.<sup>12</sup> By extension, we can see the office desk, the factory machinery, the computer screen, the class podium—likewise the voting booth, the marriage bed, the dining room table—as altars on which we exercise

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our royal priesthood. Luther rhapsodizes on how ordinary tools are sacred means of loving and serving the neighbor:

If you are a manual laborer, you find that the Bible has been put into your workshop, into your hand, into your heart. It teaches and preaches how you should treat your neighbor. Just look at your tools—at your needle or thimble, your beer barrel, your goods, your scales or yardstick or measure—and you will read this statement inscribed on them. Everywhere you look, it stares at you. Nothing that you handle every day is so tiny that it does not continually tell you this, if you will only listen.... All this is continually crying out to you: “Friend, use me in your relations with your neighbor just as you would want your neighbor to use his property in his relations with you.”<sup>13</sup>

Vocation changes the quality of what we do. Artists with a sense of vocation will create not just out of self-expression or ambition but also out of love and service—not to corrupt or denigrate—their audience. Workers and business executives who see their customers as the objects of Christian love will serve them with their very best work.

From the outside, the economy has to do with the division of labor, individuals pursuing their own self-interests, laws of supply and demand, and other impersonal forces. Therefore, it is a part of God’s created order. From the inside, however, the economy can become transfigured into a vast network of mutual dependence and mutual service, and economic activity can become an expression of love.

Vocation is where sanctification happens as Christians grow spiritually in faith and in good works. Vocation is where evangelism happens as Christians teach their children and interact with nonbelievers. Vocation is where cultural influence happens as Christians take their places and live out their faith in every niche of society. Vocation is the theology of the Christian life. Luther sums this up in one of his greatest works, *The Freedom of the Christian*:

A Christian ... should be guided in all his works by this thought and contemplate this one thing alone, that he may serve and benefit others in all that he does, considering nothing except the need and the advantage of his neighbor.... Hence, as our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our aid, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each one should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all, that is, that we may be truly Christians.<sup>14</sup>

## Notes

Note: Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

1. *Exposition of Psalm 147*, quoted by Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Evansville, Ind.: Ballast Press, 1994), 138. See Wingren also for the other illustrations and concepts from Luther that are cited here.
2. See Luther, “Confession of 1528,” in *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 37:364–65.
3. The Apostle’s Creed, third article, “The Small Catechism,” in *The Concordia Triglotta*, trans. W. H. T. Dau and F. Bente (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999).
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. See Einar Billing, *Our Calling* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 30.
7. Luther, *The Small Catechism*.
8. Wingren, 10, paraphrasing Luther’s *Kirchenpostille*.
9. Luther, “Whether Soldiers, Too, Can be Saved,” in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 46.
10. Billing, *Our Calling*, 30.
11. Luther, “The Estate of Marriage,” in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 45.
12. Luther, “The Fourth Commandment,” *The Large Catechism*, in *The Concordia Triglotta*.
13. Luther, “Commentary on The Sermon on the Mount,” in *Luther’s Works* 21:237.
14. Luther, “The Freedom of a Christian,” in *Luther’s Works*, 31:364–68.